

A Bird in the Hand.

It is impossible to trace the earliest use of the proverb "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," which in various forms of expression is common to many countries.

In Middle English we find phrases which have the same purport. Thus in Hille's "Commonplace Book" (1530) we find, "A byrde yn honde ys better than three in the wode," and in Rhod's "Babees' Book," also of early date, "A byrd in hand . . . is worth ten fye at large."

No doubt our modern version springs from these old saws, and it is possible that they may have originated in the quaint remembrance of one Will Somers, a jester in the court of Henry VIII., to whom Lord Surrey, in gratitude for many a good turn, had given a kingfisher from his aviary. When Surrey sought to recover it, promising to replace it another day, the sapient jester is said to have declined, saying, "I prefer one bird in the hand to two in the bush!"

Antarctic Penguins.

Some of the penguins in the antarctic regions weigh as much as eighty pounds and are about four feet high, with a splendid orange patch on the neck. The young take three years to develop fully, and even then the plumage is distinctly less brilliant than in the older birds. Both the movements and migration of the penguins are remarkable. When first followed the bird prefers to walk, but when in danger of being caught it drops on its abdomen and with the help of the wings glides at a pace too great to be overtaken by a man walking. They seem aware of the movements of the great ice fields and use them to help their migration to the pack ice in the north. They take trouble to collect stones, which they delight to steal from one another's piles, for nests.

Many of the ways of the penguins are suggestive of preserved instincts. Their attitude when sleeping is modeled on that of birds with fully developed wings. But the penguin has to be content with reaching the shelter of his wing with no more than the tip of his beak.

Ancient Indian Observatory.

At Jeypore, the pleasant, healthy capital of one of the most prosperous independent states of Rajputana, India, is the famous Jantar or observatory, the largest of the five built by the celebrated royal astronomer, Jey Sing, the founder of Jeypore, who succeeded the rajahs of Amber in 1683.

Chosen by Muhammad Shah to reform the calendar, his astronomical observations were formulated in tables which corrected those of De la Hire. He built five observatories, at Delhi, Benares, Muttra, Ujjain and Jeypore.

It is not under cover, but is an open courtyard, full of curious and fantastic instruments invented and designed by him. They have been allowed to go out of repair, and many of them are now quite useless. It being impossible even to guess what purpose they served in the wonderfully accurate calculations and observations of their inventor, but the dial, gnomons, quadrants, etc., still remain of great interest to astronomers.—Scientific American.

Real Elixir of Life.

Contentment is the real elixir of life. It is the real fountain from which flow the waters of perennial youth. Sometimes it costs an effort, a tremendous effort, to say it is all right, but the man or woman who can say it is much better off for thus looking at the sunny side of the world than the person who harbors a grievance against all mankind and walks through the world burdened with the somber thoughts of his disappointments. The discontented perhaps never stop to think how much worse off they could be; that, no matter how few their pleasures, there are those in the world who have fewer or none at all; that, given health and strength and the full possession of the senses, they are advantaged and blessed in the race of existence.

The Tempering of Copper.

The expression "the tempering of copper" arises from a thirteenth century misunderstanding of the Greek word *baphe*—a word used by the Greco-Egyptian alchemists of the third century. Berthelot, the eminent authority on alchemy, has shown that this word may mean tempering, coloring (of cloth, glass and metals), the coloring materials or the coloring bath. Egyptian alchemy was busied originally in producing brilliant bronzes on copper and the copper alloys, and this expression "the tempering of copper" means, and always has meant, bronzing copper so that it may simulate silver or gold.—Arthur Jones Hopkins in New York Times.

Honey in the East.

In ancient Egypt honey was employed as an embalming material, and in the east to this day it is largely used for the preservation of fruit and the making of cakes, sweetmeats and other articles of food. In India a host will offer to his guest a dish composed of honey and milk or of equal parts of curds, honey and clarified butter. It is given to a bridegroom on his arrival at the door of the bride's father. In the east, also, when grafts, seeds and birds' eggs are to be transported a great distance they are often packed in honey.

Another Victim.

"Poor Mrs. Booser suffers terribly from the liquor habit," said Mrs. Gabb. "How is that?" inquired Mrs. Chin, scolding gossip.

"When her husband comes home at night he is too far gone to pay attention to her remonstrances and the next morning he has such a headache he can't listen to her."—Portland Telegram.

Unlike Fishing Lines.

"That fishing song in the new opera is clever, don't you think?" asked the critic.

"No," replied the hard luck angler; "it isn't at all natural."

"No," the lines are too catchy."

She Quotes an Authority.
Elsie—When I grow up, mamma, I'm going to be an extravagant like you. Mamma—What makes you think I'm extravagant? Elsie—Well, I'm sure I've heard papa say so lots of times.

The Case of Adam and Eve.

"In a certain church in Colorado Springs," said an Oregon clergyman, "there used to be a queer old, crusty character, a Scot who was noted for his profound knowledge of the Scriptures. I lectured in that church one evening, and after the lecture the Scot and I and some few others fell into conversation."

"I was urged to put the old man's Scriptural knowledge to the test. I was urged to question him and to let him question me. He would get the better of me—that, every one said, was certain—but I had my doubts and, turning to the Scot, said confidently: 'I will try you, my friend, with the grand, leading, insurmountable question, How long did Adam remain in a state of innocence?'"

"The Scot answered: 'Then he got a wife.'"

"With a grim chuckle, he went on: 'But can you tell me, sir, how long he remained after?'"

"Ringer and Wind."

Making a ringer in the pitching of quoits must have been a part of the training which made the English longbowmen so terrible in siege that by gauging the distance and taking the lay of the wind they could send up a deadly volley at the exact angle to drop their arrows with destructive force into the heart of a beleaguered city. Getting the lay of the wind is the first thing to be learned in the noble art of pitching horseshoes. If the wind be contrary, the nicest calculations as to everything else will be in vain. It is only a supreme master of the game, a dashing genius in his mathematics, who can play against the wind—that is to say, one who, if the wind be from the east, can, by throwing at exactly that degree of an oblique angle needed to make it meet the wind full at the point opposite the goal, may hope to have it carried to the right spot.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Exact Obedience.

Native servants in India have the generally desirable, though sometimes inconvenient, virtue of the Chinese—doing exactly as they are told. The trouble is that they seldom use judgment.

Lord Roberts during a campaign in India had ordered his man to prepare his bath at a certain hour. One day a fierce engagement was going on, but the servant made his way through a storm of bullets and appeared at his commander's side.

"Sahib," said he, "your bath is ready."

Even a better story comes from an unknown soldier who was awakened one morning by feeling the servant of a brother officer pulling at his foot.

"Sahib," whispered the man, "sahib, what am I to do? My master told me to wake him at half past 6, but he did not go to bed till 7."

Bathers Who Sleep Floating.

"To fall asleep floating on the waves is not an impossibility," said an Atlantic City life guard. "On the sun warmed billows on an August afternoon I once floated off to sleep, and when I awoke I was nearly half a mile out at sea. I know a Camden man who often takes a floating nap off Chelsea."

"A good many people can't float even though they can swim. They can't float because they keep the line of the body, from head to heels, stiff and straight. The line should be kept curved a little—it should resemble a very broad V—and all the muscles should be loose, relaxed. It is easy to float. I have taught many children of six and seven years to do it."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Breeding Criminals.

Until the end of the eighteenth century the prisoners' dock in most important English law courts was furnished with an iron upright and collar fixed in front of the person who was being tried. If a conviction followed and the judge elected to include a decree of branding in the sentence that portion of it was carried out upon the spot. The criminal's hand was put through the collar, which was effectively screwed round the wrist and, the necessary branding irons having been previously heated in the courthouse fire, was forthwith marked upon the thumb with the letters which the judge directed to be burned upon it.

One Way to Win Sleep.

A writer in a medical journal suggests a new way of juggling with insomnia. His sleep inducer is a chain of magic words so associated in sound or meaning that each suggests the next subsequent—for instance: Ice, slippery; smooth, rough; ruffian, tramp, etc. When sleep is coy recite the list mentally. This is said to be a sure cure. It keeps the mind from rambling from subject to subject, as the mind tends to do in sleeplessness.

The Undesirable Simple Life.

Cheese and a cottage complicate life if your digestion is weak and your desire urban. So poverty is a less simple state than the possession of an income, because you are forced, if not into envy, the chief deficiency from simplicity, into struggle with unessential details, with the effort to get hold of something which is of no matter.—London Outlook.

A Theory.

"Why don't sailors say 'right' and 'left' instead of starboard and larboard?"

"Oh, I don't know. I suppose they'd hate to make things too easy for landlubbers."

It is a fine thing to know when to let go. Many a man holds on too long. It is better to jump overboard than to go down with the sinking ship.

Now They Don't Speak.

Clara—I always tell my real age. Estelle—Well, you can afford to. You see, you're not as old as you look.—Detroit Free Press.

Probably.

"Kind words cost nothing." "Exactly. I think some folk distribute them freely on that account."

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